

# The Use of Peer-Assessment in Enhancing ESP Students' Speaking Ability

<sup>1</sup> Hasnani

<sup>2</sup> Muh. Hosni Mubarak

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> Universitas Megarezky, Indonesia

## Abstract

The English for Specific Purpose students assumed that the speaking ability is the most challenging item to learn English because the English learning class and the environment are unsupportive to the students to speak in English. This research aimed to describe whether the peer assessment improves the ESP students' speaking ability or not. Thus, the researchers conducted experimental research by using a peer assessment method to check the improving speaking ability of ESP Students. This research involved 30 second-semester students of *Teknik Laboratorium Medis* at *Universitas Megarezky*. The data was analyzed from the assessment, interviews, observation, and field notes during the study. The result showed that the average of students was 67.3 before applying peer assessment, while the percentage of students' score was 82 after using peer assessment. The speaking ability increased in the post-test after using peer assessment. The peer assessment can improve the speaking ability of ESP students' performances. This study concludes that the implementation of peer-assessment improves the speaking ability performance of ESP students. Although this research proves that peer assessment significantly increases speaking ability, but the next study is urgently needed, especially for ESP students. The researchers suggest for further analysis to have more peer assessment techniques and apply peer assessment in different ways in ESP students.

## Keywords

peer-assessment  
enhancing  
speaking ability

## Ethical Lingua

Vol. 7, No. 1, 2020

ISSN 2355-3448 (Print)

ISSN 2540-9190 (Online)

## Corresponding Email

Hasnani

[hasnani.helmy@gmail.com](mailto:hasnani.helmy@gmail.com)

## Article's History

Submitted 9 December 2019

Revised 8 April 2020

Accepted 9 April 2020

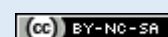
## DOI

[10.30605/25409190.135](https://doi.org/10.30605/25409190.135)

Copyright © 2020

The Author(s)

This article is licensed under  
CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 License



# The Use of Peer-Assessment in Enhancing ESP Students' Speaking Ability

Language is a style of communication. It facilitates us in contact with each other from different regions and countries (Connor, 2019). Language is also commonly regarded as the nation's unifying, especially Indonesia, which became a unifying language for all areas in Indonesia, as well as for other words. For example, English as the national language. Furthermore, Syatriana, Ardiansyah, & Orem (2018) stated that since English in Indonesia is a foreign language, most students at any level of education get difficulty in reading English text. Many students are likely to be reluctant readers because they suffer from low reading motivation that causes them to be incompetent readers (Kweldju, 1999).

Speaking is the way to communicate with other people, while in Indonesia, English is learned only at school, and people do not speak the language in society. That is why teaching speaking must be focused at school to make them capable of speaking English well (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001).

Based on the goals that have been determined, the students are expected to achieve them. However, there is a gap between the goals and the fact in the classroom. The researcher thinks that the ESP students have already got a basic knowledge of English speaking since they have studied it at senior high school. In reality, the speaking ability of students is meager. The students are not able to express their idea fluently (Paltridge & Starfield, 2016)

During observation in the speaking class of the second semester of *Teknik Laboratorium Medis* of *Universitas Megarezky*, the researcher found the problems that exist; it related to the condition of students who have low motivation to speak English. They thought that English is complicated to be spoken. They are too shy to express their idea in English because they felt worried if their friend will laugh at them. They often cover their face with a book while speaking English in front of the class. When the teacher asked them to come forward to have a conversation with a friend, they refused to do it. They felt worried if they made any mistakes. They also felt a lack of confidence to speak English.

The research problem is as follows: "How is the improvement of students' speaking ability of ESP D3 TLM before and after using peer assessment methods? The objective of the research is to find out the development of the speaking knowledge of ESP students, especially D3 TLM of Universitas Megarezky, before and after using peer-assessment methods. Significant research can make a conceptual contribution to the enforcement of English evaluation/learning methods for ESP students, as well as to improve the competence of English language Lectures to be more varied in the teaching and learning process to improve the speaking abilities of ESP students. (Thornbury, 2007). As stated in the previous statement that teaching English Speaking in ESP students is prosecute of the curriculum, this research proposes the exciting method to know the improvement of ESP students speaking ability by using peer assessment.

The researchers conducted this experimental study by using Peer-Assessment. It is another model of formative assessment where the assessment process is carried out by peers (Biggs & Tang, 1999) This form of assessment is somewhat different from before because students will provide an objective evaluation of their peers. The assessment conducted using the peer-

assessment method is an improvement in improving communication for students because it will have a significant impact that can be felt indirectly for improving communication skills (Banditvilai, 2016).

Meanwhile, the use of peer-assessment in the learning process requires the introduction of habituation to students because the assessment process will involve two parties. It aims to obtain an objective value from them. However, before using peer assessment in teaching, lecturers should discuss and inform students about the use and achievements of peer assessment (Ndoye, 2017). Teachers must also give the right direction to students not to be subjective in conducting peer assessment and provide high confidence to students in carrying out their duties; it is intended that students feel full responsibility in assessing their friends. Several things need to be considered when conducting a peer assessment, namely:

1. Make the criteria rubric clear and by the standards for evaluation.
2. Providing opportunities for students to practice peer assessment before doing the truth.
3. Explain to students that the feedback given to their peer-assessing partners will make a significant contribution to improving their abilities both personally and in teamwork.
4. Self-assessment and peer-assessment (Spiller, 2012)

Assessment in teaching is of the essence in helping students find strategies to improve communication skills and presentation skills. Teaching assessment is essential in assisting students to gain the procedures necessary for developing their speaking and oral presentation skills (Ndoye, 2017). In improving speaking skills, students must be active in the learning and assessment process. The activities carried out in the learning process are followed closely by students, as well as in terms of assessment, students must be active to pay attention to their development whether the assessment is carried out by teachers, colleagues or themselves (Fulcher, 2015).

Two terms know the assessment process in the development of speaking skills, namely formative assessment, and summative assessment. Of the two types of research, researchers will use the formative assessment to analyze student speech development data. Self and peer assessment are part of the formative evaluation. Students can do self and peer assessment in a variety of assessments, including essays, speeches, presentations, and examinations. In addition to being used in professional assessment, self and peer assessment can also be used in summative assessment assessments to improve: a) passion and desire to study harder (Intrinsic motivation); b). the need to learn (extrinsic motivation); c). learning through practice (practice, trial, and error); and d). learning through feedback (praise, constructive criticism).

There are several things students need to pay attention to when going to self-assessment and peer-assessment. The clear criteria in the assessment of achievements of an evaluation using self-assessment and peer-assessment. Assessment of self-assessment can be done in several ways, including writing diaries, discussion groups, and interviews with lecturers. Then for peer assessment, evaluations conducted by students can be in the form of a journal/diary, where students use logs to check the structure and study or review what they have learned. In addition to that, students can assess the process, content, and weaknesses and strengths of the approach used in peer-presentation, sometimes students criticize their friends more than themselves (Banditvilai, 2016).

Criticism skills are also one of the essential things in conducting this assessment because it is because students will not only criticize themselves, but they will also do it to others. Besides, the instructor also has an essential task in conducting the feedback method because of that; it will give birth to an excellent critical thinking technique from students. It concluded that seven of the excellent feedback methods are:

- a. Feedback (feedback) will help in doing a good performance
- b. Feedback fosters student development in the process of learning self and peer assessment
- c. Feedback can convey useful information about student learning.
- d. Feedback also provides excellent communication opportunities between teachers and peers in talking/communicating with each other
- e. Feedback also increases positive motivation and self-esteem for students
- f. It will also close the gap between expectations and reality in performance
- g. Feedback will also provide information to the instructor that can be used in the learning process (Fulcher, 2015).

## Method

The research involved 30 ESP students of *Teknik Laboratorium Medis* at *Universitas Megarezky* as the subject of the research. It states that the experimental method is the best way to find out the effects of the applied condition on individuals or groups (Arikunto, 2013). Thus all the classes in this research using peer assessment method, the researchers used the single pattern class as this study did not have the controlled class, and the experiments were focused on the pre-test and post-test results (Bungin, 2005).

The study was carried out at *Universitas Megarezky* in Makassar, South Sulawesi. The participants were the second-year students ( $n = 30$ ) of *D3 Teknik Laboratorium Medis* Majors, who were group into two groups. The first group is the control class, and the second group is the experimental class. Peer Assessment was designed as an educational testing that was used in this study. The purpose of this test to identify the speaking ability of the participants. The materials are composed of three categories, namely introducing themselves, storytelling and role play. The participants are required to finish each task within a limited time.

At the beginning of the research, the pre-test was conducted on the control and experimental class. The quantitative data were taken from the pre/post-test results, and observations during the research were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the enhancement of ESP students speaking ability after applying peer assessment method. After the test, the participants were divided into two groups; control and experimental classes, while the scoring of the test will consist of a scale of 20 – 60.

The nine meetings consisted of three different speaking assignments to implement peer assessment in an English-speaking class. Each session uses a different communicative English task: Introducing themselves, Storytelling, and Role Play. Each course consists of three courses in which the lecture pre-tests at the first meeting. Then, the lecturer divides students as partners before students have their performance at the next meeting. In each session, the researcher, as an observer, makes several notes to be evaluated and to be asked on interview questions. Researchers also conducted semi-structured interviews at the last

meeting after the post-test. Interviews were conducted with students selected from the highest and lowest performance scores of each class to provide feedback and self-evaluation.

Table 1. Students' Performance on Speaking Class

Performance	Score
Communication almost always effective	60 – 55
Communication generally effective	50 – 45
Communication somewhat effective	40 – 35
Communication generally not effective	30 – 25
No effective communication	20

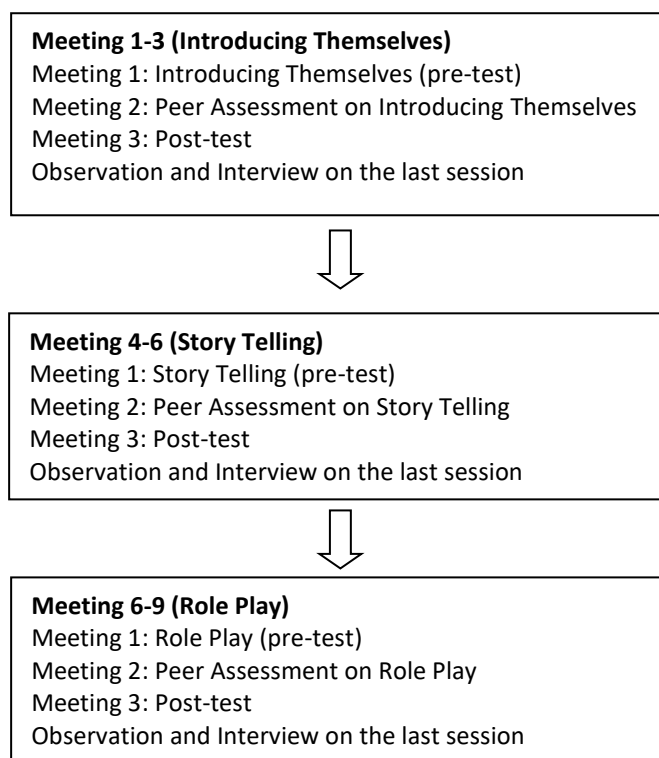


Figure 1. Research Procedure of Peer Assessment

## Results

Applying peer assessment shows students who speak less in a more informative discussion with some improvement not only in improving English skills but also in soft skills. Related to more self-confidence, more cooperative, and more motivated to practice trying English. The successful application of peer assessment in improving student achievement is not only counted by significantly increased scores on the post-test but also other indicators.

The assessment in teaching is essential in helping students find strategies to improve communication skills and presentation skills. Teaching assessment is critical in assisting

students in getting the strategy needed to develop their speaking and oral presentation skills. Students' conversations during research are increasing. Interest in assignments, simplification of complex tasks, focus, and motivation to achieve targets are all increased.

Table 2. The Mean Score

No	Speaking Skill	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	Introducing Themselves	65	78
2	Story Telling	70	83
3	Role Play	67	85

In the first speaking, the researchers use "introduce themselves" as one of the skills in conversation. Students will explain themselves, and then it will be responded by the speech partner, then will be given suggestions by the speaking partner. The score of pre-test (65) and post-test (78). While there are some improvements in self-introduction; however, after applying the peer assessment method, students prefer peer assessment in improving the English speaking.

Furthermore, the students will have more complex tasks in terms of 'Role Play.' Students will give an assessment of their colleagues about the role played; students will display their creative ideas in imagining the tasks that are performed. The students agreed that they had an increase in English speech after their interest in understanding the structure of the conversation to make ideas more organized and systematic. Peer assessment increases students' confidence and creativity, and the score of the second task; pre-test (67) and post-test (85).

The average of increasing score of speaking ability performance from the second task: Story Telling was from 70 in the pre-test to 83 in the post-test. The students revealed in the interview session that their performance on the pre-test was not as good as the post-test performance for several reasons; they are nervous, have no inspirational ideas, and lack confidence during the test.

Peer assessment decreases the problems because they provide as partners and motivates each other to focus on better performance at the second meeting. Peer assessment can mitigate the weaknesses that make students feel nervous when they are stuck in their ideas. Therefore, at the last meeting of Story Telling assignments, students showed more interest in their stories than before. Thus, the results of their applications are peer-speaking skills from ESP students. The students agree on their peers that is basically about creating supportive learning where students can support each other to achieve targets. Overall, students admit that Storytelling in peer assessment helps them to have better English speaking skills.

## Discussion

Peer assessment was successfully implemented in D3 *Teknik Laboratorium Medis*, Universitas Megarezky. The researchers thought that the students would lose themselves, but instead, their estimate was usually sharp and otherwise honest. It is not unusual for researchers to point out errors that have not been noticed in student work. However, some

students still do not trust their judgment and ask researchers to confirm that their assessment is correct. It might indicate that researchers still have several ways to guide them to take full responsibility for assessing the quality of what they are learning. Peer-assessment is more effective than teacher feedback. Peer-assessment usually refers to student assessments on all aspects, including vocabulary, grammar, originality, style, and structure (Biggs, 1999).

Based on the result of the application that peer assessment improves ESP students' speaking ability in ESP student conversations. Thus, peer assessment in three-point achievement; students move from being less communicative to be more talkative in speaking; students are more willing to express their opinions in English, and students feel more comfortable speaking.

Other scores are test results, from 70-83 to higher, around 78 - 92. All students have higher scores in more post-tests. Therefore, the application of peer assessment can be considered as an alternative way to improve ESP student relationships because it provides interaction between students to give mutual assistance to progress. It is because peer assessment can create better learning and support for students, so students cannot again be using English in class (Paltridge & Starfield, 2016).

## Conclusion

This research shows that the implementation of peer-assessment could improve the speaking ability of ESP students. This research was conducted in two cycles, and the improvement in speaking ability occurred in the second cycle after applying peer assessment. Although this research proves that peer assessment significantly increases speaking ability, rigorous research is urgently needed, especially for ESP students. For further analysis, this research is expected to have more peer assessment techniques applied to other English language skills as well as coordinating the best practices of peer assessment in different ways.

For the researcher, there are many elements positive and negative in this study that the other researcher can use as a new insight or knowledge. Further, the researcher hoped this research could be a source for the other researcher in the teaching and learning process, and the study could be one of the source information for the institution.

## Acknowledgment

A sincere thanks to the government, especially the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia for providing the opportunity and funding all research activities in the Beginner Lecturer Research (PDP) scheme to the researchers.

## References

- Alderson, J. C., & Banerjee, J. (2001). Language testing and assessment (Part I). *Language Teaching*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800014464>
- Arikunto, S. (2013). *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktik (Edisi Revisi)*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Banditvilai, C. (2016). Enhancing students' language skills through blended learning. *Electronic Journal of E-Learning*.
- Biggs, J. B., & Tang, C. (1999). Assessing for learning quality: II. Practice. *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00005176-200304000-00028>



- Biggs, J. (1999). Teaching for Quality Learning at University Assessing for learning quality: II. Practice. In *Teaching for quality learning at university: What the student does*.
- Bungin, B. (2005). Data Penelitian Kuantitatif. *PT Raja Grafindo. Jakarta, 2005*.
- Connor, C. M. D. (2019). Using Technology and Assessment to Personalize Instruction: Preventing Reading Problems. *Prevention Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-017-0842-9>
- Fulcher, G. (2015). Assessing second language speaking. *Language Teaching*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444814000391>
- Kweldju, S. (1999). English Department Students' Collocation Abilities. *TEFLIN Journal*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v10i1/48-62>
- Ndoye, A. (2017). Peer / Self Assessment and Student Learning. *International Journal of Teaching*.
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2016). English for specific purposes. In *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315716893>
- Spiller, D. (2012). Assessment Matters: Self-Assessment and Peer Assessment Assessment. *Teaching Development Unit*. University of Waikato.
- Syatriana, E., Ardiansyah, A., & Orem, R. (2018). The application of interactive Task-Based Learning for EFL students. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*. <https://doi.org/10.33750/ijhi.v1i1.5>
- Thornbury, S. (2007). *How to teach speaking*. Longman.